

**REMARKS**

In the Office Action<sup>1</sup>, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 7, 9, 13, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,650,794 to Aoki ("*Aoki*"); rejected claims 5, 11, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aoki in view of U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2001/0044798 to Nagral et al. ("*Nagral*"); and objected to claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 18 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant has amended claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 17 and canceled claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 18. Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 17 are pending.

In response to the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 18 (Office Action at page 4), Applicant has canceled claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 18, without prejudice or disclaimer of their subject matter, and amended independent claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 17 to include the subject matter of claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 18, respectively. Since the Examiner indicated that claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 18 "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims" (Office Action at page 4), Applicant submits this amendment renders the application in condition for allowance.

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<sup>1</sup> The Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicant declines to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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